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SUBJECT: AZERBAIJAN: TIP INTERIM ASSESSMENT

REF: A. STATE 109948
[1](#)B. BAKU 856

[1](#)1. (U) In response to reftel A, post provides the following information for the interim assessment of Azerbaijan's progress on combating trafficking in persons.

Implementing the NRM and Identifying Victims for Assistance

[1](#)2. (SBU) The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for victims was passed on August 11 by the Cabinet of Ministers, and a list of Indicators of Trafficking was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers on September 15. The GOAJ has held interagency meetings in accordance with the NRM and held an international workshop in October to train all ministries on the provisions of the new documents. The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) -- in conjunction with the OSCE, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the U.S. Department of Justice -- has held a number of training sessions for police, judges, and prosecutors on victim identification and treatment. The Ministry of Labor has opened a Victim Assistance Center, which provides job training, English language classes, and job placement services to victims. However, per reftel B, the first large suspected trafficking case discovered since the passage of these regulations shows that the GOAJ still needs to improve both its investigation capabilities and its victim assistance methods. When faced with a real-world situation, the GOAJ seemed to lack the political will to take strong measures in this case.

Allocating sufficient funding to implement the NAP

[1](#)3. (SBU) The MIA reports a budget of 500,000 AZN (609,750 USD), allocated from the annual state budget, to provide assistance to victims of trafficking. The MIA believes this is adequate for now, but said the total is flexible and more can be requested if needed throughout the year.

Increasing interagency coordination and identifying points of contact

[1](#)4. (SBU) 14 ministries are designated to participate in the National Action Plan and National Referral Mechanism. Points of contact for trafficking issues have been identified in each ministry, and an interagency working group created,

chaired by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. This group has met three times since the new National Action Plan was passed in February.

Improving assistance and protection of child victims

15. (SBU) The Ministry of Internal Affairs renovated a section of its shelter for trafficking victims for the exclusive use of children. This section has a separate entrance from the rest of the shelter, has a playroom for young children and a schoolroom for older children. There is a separate dining facility with the ability to provide appropriate nutrition for children of all ages. There is also a bedroom in this section for a woman with an infant. Children are allowed to stay in this shelter as long as needed. The Ministry of Education has also designated several kindergartens and elementary schools where child victims can be placed on short notice, as needed. The MIA also says it conducts preventative measures to identify possible child victims among children who are begging on the street. On November 19 the Cabinet of Ministers passed new regulations on assistance to child victims, although the details of these regulations are not yet available.

Increasing efforts to investigate, prosecute, and convict government officials complicit in trafficking

16. (SBU) The GOAJ has not investigated any government officials for trafficking during the reporting period. The MIA states, however, that it would fully investigate any complaint brought against any GOAJ official. The MIA reports that all employees of its Anti-Trafficking Unit are vetted for compliance with human rights standards before they are hired into the unit, and that all employees undergo regular inspection for compliance with these standards.

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